

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

N<sup>o</sup>. 100.]

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1861.

[PRICE 2d.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

"MY DEAR MR. PIP,

"I write this by request of Mr. Gargery, for to let you know that he is going to London in company of Mr. Wopsle and would be glad if agreeable to be allowed to see you. He would call at Barnard's Hotel Tuesday morning 9 o'clock, when if not agreeable please leave word. Your poor sister is much the same as when you left. We talk of you in the kitchen every night, and wonder what you are saying and doing. If now considered in the light of a liberty, excuse it for the love of poor old days. No more, dear Mr. Pip, from

"Your ever obliged, and affectionate

"Servant,

"BIDDY.

"P.S. He wishes me most particular to write *what larks*. He says you will understand. I hope and do not doubt it will be agreeable to see him even though a gentleman, for you had ever a good heart and he is a worthy, worthy man. I have read him all, excepting only the last little sentence, and he wishes me most particular to write again *what larks*."

I received this letter by the post on Monday morning, and therefore its appointment was for next day. Let me confess exactly, with what feelings I looked forward to Joe's coming.

Not with pleasure, though I was bound to him by so many ties; no; with considerable disturbance, some mortification, and a keen sense of incongruity. If I could have kept him away by paying money, I certainly would have paid money. My greatest reassurance was, that he was coming to Barnard's Inn, not to Hammersmith, and consequently would not fall in Bentley Drummel's way. I had little objection to his being seen by Herbert or his father, for both of whom I had a respect; but I had the sharpest sensitiveness as to his being seen by Drummel, whom I held in contempt. So, throughout life, our worst weaknesses and meannesses are usually committed for the sake of the people whom we most despise.

I had begun to be always decorating the chambers in some quite unnecessary and inappropriate way or other, and very expensive those wrestles with Barnard proved to be. By

this time, the rooms were vastly different from what I had found them, and I enjoyed the honour of occupying a few prominent pages in the books of a neighbouring upholsterer. I had got on so fast of late, that I had even started a boy in boots—top boots—in bondage and slavery to whom I might have been said to pass my days. For, after I had made the monster (out of the refuse of my washerwoman's family) and had clothed him with a blue coat, canary waistcoat, white cravat, creamy breeches, and the boots already mentioned, I had to find him a little to do and a great deal to eat; and with both of those horrible requirements he haunted my existence.

This avenging phantom was ordered to be on duty at eight on Tuesday morning in the hall (it was two feet square, as charged for floorcloth), and Herbert suggested certain things for breakfast that he thought Joe would like. While I felt sincerely obliged to him for being so interested and considerate, I had an odd half-provoked sense of suspicion upon me, that if Joe had been coming to see *him*, he wouldn't have been quite so brisk about it.

However, I came into town on the Monday night to be ready for Joe, and I got up early in the morning, and caused the sitting-room and breakfast-table to assume their most splendid appearance. Unfortunately the morning was drizzly, and an angel could not have concealed the fact that Barnard was shedding sooty tears outside the window, like some weak giant of a Sweep.

As the time approached I should have liked to run away, but the Avenger pursuant to orders was in the hall, and presently I heard Joe on the staircase. I knew it was Joe by his clumsy manner of coming up-stairs—his state boots being always too big for him—and by the time it took him to read the names on the other floors in the course of his ascent. When at last he stopped outside our door, I could hear his finger tracing over the painted letters of my name, and I afterwards distinctly heard him breathing in at the keyhole. Finally he gave a faint single rap, and Pepper—such was the compromising name of the avenging boy—announced "Mr. Gargery!" I thought he never would have done wiping his feet, and that I must have gone out to lift him off the mat, but at last he came in.

"Joe, how are you, Joe?"

"Pip, how ARE you, Pip?"

With his good-honest face all glowing and shining, and his hat put down on the floor between us, he caught both my hands and worked them straight up and down, as if I had been the last-patented Pump.

"I am glad to see you, Joe. Give me your hat."

But Joe, taking it up carefully with both hands, like a bird's-nest with eggs in it, wouldn't hear of parting with that piece of property, and persisted in standing talking over it in a most uncomfortable way.

"Which you have that growed," said Joe, "and that swelled, and that gentlefolked;" Joe considered a little before he discovered this word; "as to be sure you are a honour to your king and country."

"And you, Joe, look wonderfully well."

"Thank God," said Joe, "I'm ekeval to most. And your sister, she's no worse than she were. And Biddy, she's ever right and ready. And all friends is no backerder, if not no forarder. 'Ceptin' Wopsle; he's had a drop."

All this time (still with both hands taking great care of the bird's-nest), Joe was rolling his eyes round and round the room, and round and round the flowered pattern of my dressing-gown.

"Had a drop, Joe?"

"Why, yes," said Joe, lowering his voice, "he's left the Church, and went into the play-acting. Which the playacting have likewise brought him to London along with me. And his wish were," said Joe, getting the bird's-nest under his left arm for the moment and groping in it for an egg with his right; "if no offence, as I would 'and you that."

I took what Joe gave me, and found it to be the crumpled playbill of a small metropolitan theatre, announcing the first appearance in that very week of "the celebrated Provincial Amateur of Roscian renown, whose unique performance in the highest tragic walk of our National Bard has lately occasioned so great a sensation in local dramatic circles."

"Were you at his performance, Joe?" I inquired.

"I were," said Joe, with emphasis and solemnity.

"Was there a great sensation?"

"Why," said Joe, "yes, there certainly were a peck of orange-peel. Partickler, when he see the ghost. Though I put it to yourself, sir, whether it were calculate to keep a man up to his work with a good hart, to be continually cutting in betwixt him and the Ghost with 'Amen!' A man may have had a misfortun' and been in the Church," said Joe, lowering his voice to an argumentative and feeling tone, "but that is no reason why you should put him out at such a time. Which I meandersay, if the ghost of a man's own father cannot be allowed to claim his attention, what can, Sir? Still more, when his m'urnin' at is unfortunately made so small as that the weight of the black feathers brings it off, try to keep it on how you may."

A ghost-seeing effect in Joe's own countenance informed me that Herbert had entered the room. So I presented Joe to Herbert, who held out his hand; but Joe backed from it, and held on by the bird's-nest.

"Your servant, Sir," said Joe, "which I hope as you and Pip"—here his eye fell on the Avenger, who was putting some toast on table, and so plainly denoted an intention to make that young gentleman one of the family, that I frowned it down and confused him more—"I meandersay, you two gentlemen—which I hope, as you get your elubs in this close spot? For the present may be a werry good inn, according to London opinions," said Joe, confidentially, "and I believe its character do stand i; but I wouldn't keep a pig in it myself—not in the case that I wished him to fatten wholesome and to eat with a meller flavour on him."

Having borne this flattering testimony to the merits of our dwelling-place, and having incidentally shown this tendency to call me "sir," Joe, being invited to sit down to table, looked all round the room for a suitable spot on which to deposit his hat—as if it were only on some very few rare substances in nature that it could find a resting-place—and ultimately stood it on an extreme corner of the chimney-piece, from which it ever afterwards fell off at intervals.

"Do you take tea, or coffee, Mr. Gargery?" asked Herbert, who always presided of a morning.

"Thankee, Sir," said Joe, stiff from head to foot, "I'll take whichever is most agreeable to yourself."

"What do you say to coffee?"

"Thankee, Sir," returned Joe, evidently dispirited by the proposal, "since you are so kind as make choice of coffee, I will not run contrary to your own opinions. But don't you never find it a little 'eating'?"

"Say tea then," said Herbert, pouring it out.

Here Joe's hat tumbled off the mantelpiece, and he started out of his chair and picked it up, and fitted it to the same exact spot. As if it were an absolute point of good breeding that it should tumble off again soon.

"When did you come to town, Mr. Gargery?"

"Were it yesterday afternoon?" said Joe, after coughing behind his hand, as if he had had time to catch the whooping-cough since he came. "No it were not. Yes it were. Yes. It were yesterday afternoon" (with an appearance of mingled wisdom, relief, and strict impartiality).

"Have you seen anything of London, yet?"

"Why, yes, Sir," said Joe, "me and Wopsle went off straight to look at the Blacking Ware's. But we didn't find that it come up to its likeness in the red bills at the shop doors; which I meandersay," added Joe, in an explanatory manner, "as it is there draw'd too architectooralooral."

I really believe Joe would have prolonged this word (mightily expressive to my mind of some architecture that I know) into a perfect Chorus, but for his attention being providentially attracted by his hat, which was toppling. Indeed, it demanded from him a constant attention, and a quickness of eye and hand, very like that exacted by wicket-keeping. He made extraordinary play with it, and showed the greatest skill; now, rushing at it and catching it neatly as it dropped; now, merely stopping it midway, beating it up, and humouring it in various parts of the room and against a good deal of the pattern of the paper on the wall, before he felt it safe to close with it; finally splashing it into the slop-basin, where I took the liberty of laying hands upon it.

As to his shirt-collar, and his coat-collar, they were perplexing to reflect upon—insoluble mysteries both. Why should a man scrape himself to that extent, before he could consider himself full dressed? Why should he suppose it necessary to be purified by suffering for his holiday clothes? Then he fell into such unaccountable fits of meditation, with his fork midway between his plate and his mouth; had his eyes attracted in such strange directions; sat so far from the table, and dropped so much more than he ate, and pretended that he hadn't dropped it; that I was heartily glad when Herbert left us for the City.

I had neither the good sense nor the good feeling to know that this was all my fault, and that if I had been easier with Joe, Joe would have been easier with me. I felt impatient of him and out of temper with him; in which condition he heaped coals of fire on my head.

"Us two being now alone, Sir"—began Joe.

"Joe," I interrupted, pettishly, "how can you call me Sir?"

Joe looked at me for a single instant with something faintly like reproach. Utterly preposterous as his cravat was, and as his collars were, I was conscious of a sort of dignity in the look.

"Us two being now alone," resumed Joe, "and me having the intentions and abilities to stay not many minutes more, I will now conclude—leastways begin—to mention what have led to my having had the present honour. For was it not," said Joe, with his old air of lucid exposition, "that my only wish were to be useful to you, I should not have had the honour of breaking witties in the company and abode of gentlemen."

I was so unwilling to see the look again, that I made no remonstrance against this tone.

"Well, Sir," pursued Joe, "this is how it were. I were at the Bargemen t'other night, Pip;" whenever he subsided into affection, he called me Pip, and whenever he relapsed into politeness he called me Sir; "when there come up in his shay-cart, Pumblechook. Which that same identical," said Joe, going down a new

track, "do comb my 'air the wrong way sometimes, awful, by giving out up and down town as it wore him which ever had your infant companionation and were looked upon as a play-fellow by yourself."

"Nonsense. It was you, Joe."

"Which I fully believed it were, Pip," said Joe, slightly teasing his head, "though it signify little now, Sir. Well, Pip; this same identical, which his manners is given to blusterous, come to me at the Bargemen (wot a pipe and a pint of beer do give refreshment to the working man, Sir, and do not over stimulate), and his word were, 'Joseph, Miss Havisham she wish to speak to you.'"

"Miss Havisham, Joe?"

"She wish' were Pumblechook's word, 'to speak to you.'" Joe sat and rolled his eyes at the ceiling.

"Yes, Joe? Go on, please."

"Next day, Sir," said Joe, looking at me as if I were a long way off, "having cleaned myself, I go and I see Miss A."

"Miss A., Joe? Miss Havisham?"

"Which I say, Sir," replied Joe, with an air of legal formality, as if he were making his will, "Miss A., or otherways Havisham. Her expression air then as follering: 'Mr. Gargery. You air in correspondence with Mr. Pip?' Having had a letter from you, I were able to say 'I am.' (When I married your sister, Sir, I said 'I will,' and when I answered your friend, Pip, I said 'I am.') 'Would you tell him, then,' said she, 'that which Estella has come home and would be glad to see him.'"

I felt my face fire up as I looked at Joe. I hope one remote cause of its firing, may have been my consciousness that if I had known his errand, I should have given him more encouragement.

"Biddy," pursued Joe, "when I got home and asked her fur to write the message to you, a little hung back. Biddy says, 'I know he will be very glad to have it by word of mouth, it is holiday-time, you want to see him, go!' I have now concluded, Sir," said Joe, rising from his chair, "and, Pip, I wish you ever well and ever prospering to a greater and a greater height."

"But you are not going now, Joe?"

"Yes I am," said Joe.

"But you are coming back to dinner, Joe?"

"No I am not," said Joe.

Our eyes met, and all the "Sir" melted out of that manly heart as he gave me his hand.

"Pip, dear old chap, life is made of ever so many partings welded together, as I may say, and one man's a blacksmith, and one's a whitesmith, and one's a goldsmith, and one's a coppersmith. Divisions among such must come, and must be met as they come. If there's been any fault at all to-day, it's mine. You and me is not two figures to be together in London; nor yet anywhere else but what is private, and beknown, and understood among friends. It ain't that I am proud, but that I want to be

right, as you shall never see me no more in these clothes. I'm wrong in these clothes. I'm wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off th' meshes. You won't find half so much fault in me if you think of me in my forge dress, with my hammer in my hand, or even my pipe. You won't find half so much fault in me if, supposing as you should ever wish to see me, you come and put your head in at the forge window and see Joe the blacksmith, there, at the old anvil, in the old burnt apron, sticking to the old work. I'm awful dull, but I hope I've beat out something nigh the rights of this at last. And so God bless you, dear old Pip, old chap, Gon bless you!"

I had not been mistaken in my fancy that there was a simple dignity in him. The fashion of his dress could no more come in its way when he spoke these words, than it could come in its way in Heaven. He touched me gently on the forehead, and went out. As soon as I could recover myself sufficiently, I hurried out after him and looked for him in the neighbouring streets; but he was gone.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

It was clear that I must repair to our town next day, and in the first flow of my repentance it was equally clear that I must stay at Joe's. But when I had secured my box-place by to-morrow's coach and had been down to Mr. Pocket's and back, I was not by any means convinced on the last point, and began to invent reasons and make excuses for putting up at the Blue Boar. I should be an inconvenience at Joe's; I was not expected, and my bed would not be ready; I should be too far from Miss Havisham's, and she was exacting and mightn't like it. All other swindlers upon earth are nothing to the self-swindlers, and with such pretences did I cheat myself. Surely a curious thing. That I should innocently take a bad half-crown of somebody else's manufacture, is reasonable enough; but that I should knowingly reckon the spurious coin of my own make, as good money! An obliging stranger, under pretence of compactly folding up my bank notes for security's sake, abstracts the notes and gives me nutshells; but what is his sleight of hand to mine, when I fold up my own nutshells and pass them on myself as notes!

Having settled that I must go to the Blue Boar, my mind was much disturbed by indecision whether or no to take the Avenger. It was tempting to think of that expensive Mercenary publicly airing his boots in the archway of the Blue Boar's posting-yard; it was almost solemn to imagine him casually produced in the tailor's shop and confounding the disrespectful senses of Trabb's boy. On the other hand, Trabb's boy might worm himself into his intimacy and tell him things; or, reckless and desperate wretch as I knew he could be, might hoot him in the High-street. My patroness, too, might hear of him, and not approve. On the whole, I resolved to leave the Avenger behind.

It was the afternoon coach by which I had taken my place, and, as winter had now come round, I should not arrive at my destination until two or three hours after dark. Our time of starting from the Cross Keys was two o'clock. I arrived on the ground with a quarter of an hour to spare, attended by the Avenger—if I may connect that expression with one who never attended on me if he could possibly help it.

At that time it was customary to carry Convicts down to the dockyards by stage-coach. As I had often heard of them in the capacity of outside-passengers, and had more than once seen them on the high road dangling their ironed legs over the coach roof, I had no cause to be surprised when Herbert, meeting me in the yard, came up and told me there were two convicts going down with me. But I had a reason that was an old reason now, for constitutional faltering whenever I heard the word convict.

"You don't mind them, Handel?" said Herbert.

"Oh no!"

"I thought you seemed as if you didn't like them?"

"I can't pretend that I do like them, and I suppose you don't particularly. But I don't mind them."

"See! There they are," said Herbert, "coming out of the Tap. What a degraded and vile sight it is!"

They had been treating their guard, I suppose, for they had a gaoler with them, and all three came out wiping their mouths on their hands. The two convicts were handcuffed together, and had irons on their legs—irons of a pattern that I knew well. They wore the dress that I likewise knew well. Their keeper had a brace of pistols, and carried a thick-knobbed bludgeon under his arm; but he was on terms of good understanding with them, and stood, with them beside him, looking on at the putting-to of the horses, rather with an air as if they were an interesting Exhibition not formally open at the moment, and he the Curator. One was a taller and stouter man than the other, and appeared as a matter of course, according to the mysterious ways of the world both convict and free, to have had allotted to him the smallest suit of clothes. His arms and legs were like great pincushions of those shapes, and his attire disguised him absurdly; but I knew his half-closed eye at one glance. There stood the man whom I had seen on the settle at the Three Jolly Bargemen on a Saturday night, and who had brought me down with his invisible gun!

It was easy to make sure that as yet he knew me no more than if he had never seen me in his life. He looked across at me, and his eye appraised my watch-chain, and then he incidentally spat and said something to the other convict, and they laughed and slued themselves round with a clink of their coupling manacle, and looked at something else. The great numbers on their backs, as if they were street doors;

their coarse mangy ungainly outer surface, as if they were lower animals; their ironed legs, apologetically garlanded with pocket-handkerchiefs; and the way in which all present looked at them and kept from them; made them (as Herbert had said) a most disagreeable and degrading spectacle.

But this was not the worst of it. It came out that the whole of the back of the coach had been taken by a family removing from London, and that there were no places for the two prisoners but on the seat in front behind the coachman. Hereupon, a choleric gentleman, who had taken the fourth place on that seat, flew into a most violent passion, and said that it was a breach of contract to mix him up with such villainous company, and that it was poisonous and pernicious and infamous and shameful and I don't know what else. At this time the coach was ready and the coachman impatient, and we were all preparing to get up, and the prisoners had come over with their keeper—bringing with them that curious flavour of bread-politice, baize, rope-yarn, and hearthstone, which attends the convict presence.

"Don't take it so much amiss, sir," pleaded the keeper to the angry passenger; "I'll sit next you myself. I'll put 'em on the outside of the row. They won't interfere with you, sir. You needn't know they're there."

"And don't blame *me*," growled the convict I had recognised. "I don't want to go. I am quite ready to stay behind. As far as I am concerned any one's welcome to *my* place."

"Or mine," said the other, gruffly. "I wouldn't have incommode none of you, if I'd a had *my* way." Then they both laughed, and began cracking nuts, and spitting the shells about.—As I really think I should have liked to do myself, if I had been in their place and so despised.

At length it was voted that there was no help for the angry gentleman, and that he must either go in his chance company or remain behind. So he got into his place, still making complaints, and the keeper got into the place next him, and the convicts hauled themselves up as well as they could, and the convict I had recognised sat behind me with his breath on the hair of my head.

"Good-by, Handel!" Herbert called out as we started. I thought what a blessed fortune it was that he had found another name for me than Pip.

It is impossible to express with what acuteness I felt the convict's breathing, not only on the back of my head, but all along my spine. The sensation was like being touched in the marrow with some pungent and searching acid, and it set my very teeth on edge. He seemed to have more breathing business to do than another man, and to make more noise in doing it; and I was conscious of growing high-shouldered on one side, in my shrinking endeavours to fend him off.

The weather was miserably raw, and the two cursed the cold. It made us all lethargic before

we had gone far, and when we had left the Half-way House behind, we habitually dozed and shivered and were silent. I dozed off, myself, in considering the question whether I ought to restore a couple of pounds sterling to this creature before losing sight of him, and how it could best be done. In the act of dipping forward as if I were going to bathe among the horses, I woke in a fright and took the question up again.

But I must have lost it longer than I had thought, since, although I could recognise nothing in the darkness and the fitful lights and shadows of our lamps, I traced marsh country in the cold damp wind that blew at us. Cowering forward for warmth and to make me a screen against the wind, the convicts were closer to me than before. The very first words I heard them interchange as I became conscious, were the words of my own thought "Two One Pound notes."

"How did he get 'em?" said the convict I had never seen.

"How should I know?" returned the other. "He had 'em stowed away somehow. Giv him by friends, I expect."

"I wish," said the other, with a bitter curse upon the cold, "that I had 'em here."

"Two one pound notes, or friends?"

"Two one pound notes. I'd sell all the friends I ever had, for one, and think it a blessed good bargain. Well? So he says—?"

"So he says," resumed the convict I had recognised—"it was all said and done in half a minute, behind a pile of timber in the Dockyard—"you're a going to be discharged?" Yes, I was. Would I find out that boy that had fed him and kep his secret, and give him them two one pound notes? Yes, I would. And I did."

"More fool you," growled the other. "I'd have spent 'em on a Man, in wittles and drink. He must have been a green one. Mean to say he knew nothing of you?"

"Not a ha'porth. Different gangs and different ships. He was tried again for prison breaking, and got made a Lifter."

"And was that—Honour!—the only time you worked out, in this part of the country?"

"The only time."

"What might have been your opinion of the place?"

"A most beastly place. Mudbank, mist, swamp, and work; work, swamp, mist, and mudbank."

They both execrated the place in very strong language, and gradually growled themselves out and had nothing left to say.

After overhearing this dialogue, I should assuredly have got down and been left in the solitude and darkness of the highway, but for feeling certain that the man had no suspicion of my identity. Indeed, I was not only so changed in the course of nature, but so differently dressed and so differently circumstanced, that it was not at all likely he could have known me without accidental help. Still, the coincidence of our being together on the coach, was sufficiently strange to fill me with a dread that

some other coincidence might at any moment connect me, in his hearing, with my name. For this reason, I resolved to alight as soon as we touched the town, and put myself out of his hearing. This device I executed successfully. My little portmanteau was in the boot under my feet; I had but to turn a hinge to get it out; I threw it down before me, got down after it, and was left at the first lamp on the first stones of the town pavement. As to the convicts, they went their way with the coach, and I knew at what point they would be spirited off to the river. In my fancy, I saw the boat with its convict crew waiting for them at the slime-washed stairs,—again heard the gruff “Give way, you!” like an order to dogs—again saw the wicked Noah’s Ark lying out in the black water.

I could not have said what I was afraid of, for my fear was altogether undefined and vague, but there was great fear upon me. As I walked on to the hotel, I felt that a dread, much exceeding the mere apprehension of a painful or disagreeable recognition, made me tremble. I am confident that it took no distinctness of shape, and that it was the revival for a few minutes of the terror of childhood.

The coffee-room at the Blue Boar was empty, and I had not only ordered my dinner there, but had sat down to it, before the waiter knew me. As soon as ever he had apologised for the remissness of his memory, he asked me if he should send Boots for Mr. Pumblechook?

“No,” said I, “certainly not.”

The waiter (it was he who had brought up the Great Remonstrance from the Commercials on the day when I was bound) appeared surprised, and took the earliest opportunity of putting a dirty old copy of a local newspaper so directly in my way, that I took it up and read this paragraph:

“Our readers will learn, not altogether without interest, in reference to the recent romantic rise in fortune of a young artificer in iron of this neighbourhood (what a theme, by the way, for the magic pen of our as yet not universally acknowledged townsmen Tooby, the poet of our columns!), that the youth’s earliest patron, companion, and friend, was a highly-respected individual not entirely unconnected with the corn-and seed trade, and whose eminently convenient and commodious business premises are situate within a hundred miles of the High-street. It is not wholly irrespective of our personal feelings that we record HIM as the Mentor of our young Telemachus, for it is good to know that our town produced the founder of the latter’s fortunes. Does the thought-contracted brow of the local Sage or the lustrous eye of local Beauty inquire whose fortunes? We believe that Quentin Matsys was the BLACKSMITH of Antwerp. VENDE SAP.”

I entertain a conviction, based upon large experience, that if in the days of my prosperity I had gone to the North Pole, I should have met somebody there, wandering Esquimaux

or civilised man, who would have told me that Pumblechook was my earliest patron and the founder of my fortunes.

#### MANAGERS AND MUSIC-HALLS.

“WHEN they do agree on the stage, their unanimity is wonderful.”

The managers of the London theatres have lately gathered together in a body, and have offered to the observation of the public a practical commentary on Sheridan’s admirable text. On this occasion, the motive for unanimous agreement among these gentlemen has been furnished by a certain entertainment at the Canterbury Music-Hall, London, which bears a suspiciously close resemblance to the representation of a pantomime. Any performance of this sort—if it takes place out of a theatre—or any performance at all which involves the interchange of dialogue between actors (even when they are only two in number) is viewed by the whole body of the London managers as a dangerous infringement on dramatic rights which they consider to have been acquired exclusively to themselves. They have accordingly come forward to restrain the proprietor of a music-hall within the strict letter of the license conceded to him, which is a license for music and dancing only—the plain object of the proceeding being to prevent all proprietors of all music-halls from amusing their audiences by means bearing any dramatic resemblance to those which are habitually employed by managers of theatres.

With the immediate judicial decision pronounced on this case, we have no present concern. It is, we believe, understood on both sides, that no one decision will be allowed to settle the dispute, and that further legal proceedings are already impending. Our purpose in referring to the subject in these pages is to ascertain what the fair interests are in relation to it, not of the managers only, but of the public at large. A very important question of dramatic Free Trade is involved in this dispute; and London audiences—comprising in these railroad times people from all parts of the kingdom—are directly concerned in the turn which may be taken by its final settlement.

A large proportion of our readers may be probably in need of some preliminary explanation on the subject of music-halls, and of the quality of the performances which are exhibited in them. These places of public entertainment may be roughly described as the growth of the last ten years, both in London and in the large towns throughout England. They are, for the most part, spacious rooms, attached to large public-houses, but having special entrance-passages of their own. The prices of admission are generally sixpence for one kind of place, and a shilling for another. Both sexes (except, we believe, at Evans’s supper-room in Covent-garden, where men only are admitted) are allowed the right of entry—there are female, as well as male performers at the entertainments—and the audience have the privilege of ordering

what they please to eat or drink, and of smoking as well, at any period of the evening's amusements, from their beginning about seven o'clock to their end a little before twelve.

Of the kind of entertainment provided for the public, under these curious conditions, and of the behaviour of the audiences during the performance, we can speak, in some degree, from personal experience. Not very long since, we visited one of the largest and most notorious of these places of amusement—Weston's Music Hall, in Holborn—on a night when the attendance happened to be unusually large, and when the resources of the establishment for preserving order were necessarily subjected to the severest possible test.

The size of the Hall may be conjectured, when it is stated that on the night of our visit, the numbers of the audience reached fifteen hundred. With scarcely a dozen exceptions, this large assembly was accommodated with seats on the floor of the building, and in a gallery which ran round three sides of it. The room was brightly lighted; tastefully decorated with mural painting; and surprisingly well ventilated, considering that the obstacle of tobacco-smoke was added to the ordinary obstacles interposed by crowded human beings and blazing gas-light to check the circulation of fresh air. At one end of the hall was a highly-raised stage, with theatrical foot-lights, but with no theatrical scenery; and, on this stage (entering from the back) appeared, sometimes singly, sometimes together, the male and female performers of the night—all, with the exception of the comic singers, in evening dress. It is not easy to describe the variety of the entertainments. There was a clever nigger vocalist with a blackened face, and nimble feet at a jig. There was another comic singer, preserving his natural complexion—a slim inexhaustible man, who accompanied himself (if the expression may be allowed) by a St. Vitus's Dance of incessant jumping, continued throughout his song, until the jumps were counted by the thousand: the performer being as marvellously in possession of his fair mortal allowance of breath at the end of the exhibition as at the beginning. There was instrumental music played by a full band of wind instruments. There was a little orchestra, besides, for accompaniments; there was a young lady who sang "serio-comic" songs; there were ladies and gentlemen who sang sentimental songs; there was a real Chinaman, who tossed real knives about his head and face, and caught them in all sorts of dangerous positions with a frightful dexterity—and who afterwards additionally delighted the audience by thanking them for their applause in the purest "Canton-English." Lastly, there was an operatic selection from the second act of "Lucia di Lammermoor," comprising not solo-singing only, but concerted music and choruses, and executed in a manner which (considering the resources at the disposal of the establishment) conferred the highest credit on the ladies and gentlemen concerned in the performance, and

on the musical director who superintended it. These entertainments, and others equally harmless, succeeded each other at the shortest intervals, throughout the evening; the audience refreshing itself the while with all varieties of drinks, and the male part of it smoking also with the supremest comfort and composure. At the most crowded period of the performances not the slightest disorder was apparent in any part of the room. The people were quietly and civilly conducted to their places by clean and attentive waiters; the proprietor was always present overlooking the proceedings. Not a single case of drunkenness appeared anywhere; no riotous voices interrupted the music. The hearty applause which greeted all the entertainments, comic and serious, never degenerated into disturbance of any kind. Many colder audiences might be found in this metropolis—but an assembly more orderly and more decorous than the assembly at the Holborn Music-Hall we have never seen gathered together at any place of public entertainment in any part of London.

Such is our experience of one of these music-halls, which may be taken as a fair sample of the rest. Canterbury Hall, which happens just now to be the special object of prosecution by theatrical managers, is simply another large concert-room, with a raised stage—possessing, however, it is only fair to add, an attraction peculiar to itself, in the shape of a gallery of pictures. In other respects, it may be at once conceded that if portions of the performances at Canterbury Hall represent an infringement on assumed theatrical privileges, portions of the performance at the Holborn Hall fall within the same category. The pantomime entertainment at one place may be, to all technical intents and purposes, matched by the operatic entertainment at the other. Both are exhibited on a stage; both are illuminated by foot-lights; both involve the interchange of dramatic dialogue—spoken in one case, sung in the other. If the managers of our two operas contemplate asserting their interests, as the managers of the other theatres have done, the performance from Lucia di Lammermoor, in Holborn, is as open to attack as the performance of pantomime which is the subject of complaint against Canterbury Hall. With scenery or without it, with costume or without it, the grand dramatic situation in Donizetti's opera, interpreted by solo singers, chorus, and orchestra, is a dramatic performance, and carries the vocalists as well as the audience away with it. Our own ears informed us, on the evening of our experience, that Edgardo delivered his famous curse in trousers, as vigorously as if he had worn the boots of the period. The Lucia of the night could not have sung the lovely music of her part with greater earnestness and emphasis, if her father's halls had opened behind her, in immeasurable vista, on a piece of painted canvas—and Colonel Ashton was as pitiless a gentleman in an unimpeachable dress coat, as if he had worn the most outrageous parody on Highland costume which the stage

wardrobes of operatic France or Italy could produce. If it simplifies the question now at issue—and it does surely, so far as the public discussion of the subject is concerned?—to confess at once that some of the entertainments at music-halls do in some degree trench on the ground already occupied by entertainments at theatres, we make the acknowledgment without hesitation. Legal quibbling apart, the resemblance complained of, does partially exist; and is, in the present state of the laws which regulate such matters, open to attack. Granting all this, however, one plain inquiry, so far as the public are concerned, still remains to be answered: Are the managers morally justified in claiming for themselves a monopoly in dramatic entertainment, and in proceeding against the proprietors of music-halls accordingly?

In their present situation, as we understand it, the managers have two grievances which they all complain of alike. The first of those grievances is, that theatres and music-halls are not impartially submitted to the same conditions of State control. The theatres are under the direction of the Lord Chamberlain; the music-halls are under the direction of an act of Parliament of George the Second, and the licensing magistrates. The Lord Chamberlain, acting as the official victim of old precedents, shuts up the theatres under his jurisdiction in Passion Week; and arbitrarily throws out of employment for that period, not the actors only, but thousands of poor people who live by ministering to the obscure necessities of the stage. On the other hand, the licensing magistrates, having no old precedents to fetter them, allow the music-halls to open their doors as freely in Passion Week as at any other time—the practical result being, that musical and dramatic performances, *with* smoking and drinking, are officially permitted, at exactly that period of the year when musical and dramatic performances *without* smoking and drinking, are officially prohibited. The absurdity and injustice of this proceeding are too manifest for comment. If it is wrong to allow any public amusements in Passion Week, shut the music-halls—if it is right, open the theatres. So far as this really serious grievance is concerned, our sympathies are heartily with the managers. Instead of gaining any advantage by being placed under the courtly authority of the Lord Chamberlain, they are actually oppressed, in this particular, by a gross injustice; and they deserve all the help we can give them in subjecting that injustice to public exposure and public attack.

But the second grievance—which these gentlemen are now endeavouring to assert—the grievance which practically declares that they object to all dramatic competition, out of their own especial circle, is so preposterous in itself, and is so utterly opposed to the public spirit of the time, that we reject all belief in it, on grounds of the plainest common sense. The great social law of this age and this nation, is the law of competition. Why are managers of theatres not to submit to it, as well as other

people? Some of these gentlemen, in all probability, occasionally see a penny daily paper. What would they have thought, if the proprietors of *The Times*, of *The Daily News*, and of the other morning journals, previously established, and selling at a higher price, had all met together, on the starting of penny papers, and had claimed protection from the public authorities, on the ground that cheap competition in the matter of purveying daily intelligence was an attack on their personal interests? Why, the very pastrycooks, who once had the monopoly of sixpenny ices, knew better than to make a public outcry on the establishment of the penny ice-shops! Nay, the predecessors of the managers themselves, not only recognised but asserted the privilege of free competition in a free country. Those voices were raised loudest against dramatic monopoly, in the time of the two patent theatres? The voices of the proprietors of minor theatres, who then occupied a position towards Covent Garden and Drury Lane, in many respects similar to the position which the music-halls now occupy towards all the theatres in London. Here is the elder generation of managers shouting, on one side, for Free Trade—and there is the younger generation petitioning, on the other, for Protection! Was there ever such an anomaly? Who is to justify or explain it?

If there had been no other and better reason to restrain the managers from coming forward to assert an obsolete protectionist principle (under cover of asserting a strict interpretation of the law), surely the consideration of mere expediency might well have hindered them. We know that these gentlemen are acting on a strong conviction, however lamentably mistaken they may be. But the public has no time to draw fine distinctions: what will the public think of the attempted suppression of the pantomimic entertainment in Canterbury Hall, at the suit of the London managers? Will it not be said—"Here are several eminent gentlemen, occupying the highest places in their profession, and administering the resources of our greatest theatrical establishments, all incomprehensibly jealous of the performances of a tavern-concert-room!" Such an imputation would, no doubt, be justly repudiated by the managers; but what plain inference is the world outside the green-room to draw from facts as they stand at present? Perhaps there is one other legitimate conclusion, which has certainly occurred to ourselves, and which the report of the trial in the newspaper may justify. When we saw the deservedly respected name of Mr. Benjamin Webster—who has done more (at the New Adelphi Theatre) to promote the public convenience than any other manager of his time—set up as the name of the plaintiff in a case which had for its ultimate object an interference with the public amusement, we certainly did consider that the spectacle of the wrong man in the wrong place had been somewhat inconsiderately offered to popular contemplation. And, let it be added, we were only the more confirmed in

this view, when we remembered that the manager who had been selected to express, on behalf of his brethren, a deep-seated distrust of the rivalry of music-halls, was also the very manager whose theatre has been literally besieged by the public for the last hundred and fifty nights, and is likely to be besieged in the future for a hundred and fifty more. Surely it was a grave error to choose such a prosperous proprietor as Mr. Webster—a man who has shown a determination to advance with the time—to point the protectionist moral and adorn the managerial tale!

To speak seriously, in conclusion, the managers have taken a false step. They have placed themselves in a persecuting as well as a prosecuting position; and they are most unwisely attempting to dispute a principle which the public opinion of the age has long since regarded as settled. We earnestly recommend them to reconsider their course of action—in their own interests. The hostile point of view from which they now regard the music-halls is short-sighted in the extreme. To return to our previous illustration. It is notorious that the cheap newspapers, instead of disputing the public encouragement with the newspapers at a higher price, have raised up an audience for themselves. It is notorious that the library circulation of good novels has rather increased than diminished, since the time when opposition novels have stirred the waters in the world of fiction, by pouring regularly from the press in cheap instalments at a penny a week. On the same principle, the music-halls have unquestionably raised up *their* new public; and, in doing so, will indirectly help to improve the prospects of the theatres, by increasing the number of people who look to public amusements as the occupation of their evening. If the managers don't see this—if they don't see that a per-cent of the music-hall audience (not a very large one probably, but still a per-cent) is, in the ordinary course of things, certain to drift into theatres from a natural human love of change—they must at least admit that they already possess, in undisturbed monopoly, immense dramatic advantages over those other caterers for the public amusement, who are following them at a respectful distance. They have the use of stage means and appliances which no music-hall can possibly command, without being knocked down and built up again for the purpose. They have actors and actresses who stand, in a personal as well as in a pecuniary sense, out of music-hall reach. They have relations with English literature which no music-hall possesses, or dreams of possessing; and they have a refined, intelligent, and wealthy public to appeal to, from which the music-halls are separated by the great social gulf which we all know there is no crossing. Here, without prosecutions, disputes, and vexatiously strict interpretations of the letter of the law, is vantage-ground enough for any theatre which is properly administered; vantage-ground which the fiercest music-hall rivalry cannot cut away.

As for the public interest in this question, the discussion of which we have modestly left to the last, the direction that it takes is so obvious as hardly to need pointing out. The more competition there is, the more certainly the public will be the gainers. Let the spur of the music-halls—if any such spur there be—stimulate the theatres to higher and higher exertions by all manner of means: the drama will be the better for it; the actors will study their art the more for it; the audiences will be the larger for it; the managers will be the richer for it. The success of *The Colleen Bawn*, at the Adelphi; the success of that excellent artist Mr. Fechter, at the Princess's; and the success of the admirable pantomime at Drury Lane; all three achieved in the same theatrical year, are facts to form an opinion on; facts which justify the conclusion that a great dramatic attraction is as much above all small rivalries in our day, as ever it was in that golden theatrical age when music-halls were not heard of in the land! We trust the managers may yet be induced to reconsider the motives on which they have too hastily acted. We trust they may yet see that it is their interest, as we are sure it is always their inclination, to follow the old proverbial rule which enjoins us all to Live and let live.

#### MAGIC AND SCIENCE.

ANCIENT magic was ancient science. To surprise the secrets of Nature, and, by surprising them, to control phenomena and turn them to his purposes, has everywhere been the irresistible longing of man, placed amid unseen forces with nothing but his wit to aid him. How marvellously his wit has aided him need not be told; but the help came slowly, and the victories were gained only after a succession of defeats. That which mainly thwarted him was Impatience, and its offspring, Credulity; that which mainly aided him was Patience. From the first sprang Magic; from the second, Science. Passion is ever credulous, and when the mind is greatly excited, it is ready to believe almost anything which favours its desires.

The credulity of early ages has also another source. In ignorance of the true order of Nature we find no difficulty in believing that one thing takes place rather than another. What to the cultivated minds seems a physical impossibility, to the uncultivated seems as probable as anything else. It is therefore not only far from incredible, it is highly probable to the savage that the ordinary phenomena of Nature should be the actions of capricious beings, whose caprices may be propitiated. He observes the rain falling, the seed sprouting, his cattle perishing, his children sickening, all by agencies unseen, which he at once supposes to be Spirits resembling the spirit within him, though mightier: superhuman in power, they are conceived to be human in feeling, because no other conception of power is possible to him. In animating Nature, man necessarily animates it with

a soul like his own. He therefore cannot help supposing that the varied phenomena which pass before him are acts of arbitrary and capricious volition. Like the potentates of his tribe or nation, these Unseen Agencies require to be flattered, or intimidated. Incense, sacrifices, ceremonies of homage, prayers and supplications, may captivate their favour. Failing this, there is the resource of incantation, exorcism, amulets, and charms; the aid of some more powerful spirit is invoked; or the secret of some weakness is surprised. Sometimes the malignity of a spirit may be thwarted by the mere invocation of the name of a mightier spirit; and sometimes by the mere employment of a disagreeable object—holy water, or a strong smell—before which the demon flies. This is the condition of the mind in all half-civilised peoples; and this is the condition which determines Magic.

In the slow travail of thought, and by the accumulation of experience, another condition is brought about, and Science emerges. Before it can emerge, the most important of all changes must have taken place: the phenomena of Nature, at least all the most ordinary phenomena, must have been disengaged from this conception of an arbitrary and *capricious* power, similar to human will, and must have been recognised as *constant*, always succeeding each other with fatal regularity. This once recognised, Science can begin slowly to ascertain the *order* of Nature—the laws of succession and co-existence; and having in any case ascertained this order, it can predict with certainty the results which will arrive. If I know that the order of Nature is such that air which has once been breathed becomes imperfectly adapted for a second breathing; and becomes poisonous after a repetition of the process, I do not, when I see my fellow-creatures perishing because they breathe this vitiated air, attempt to propitiate the noxious spirit by supplications, or to intimidate by charms and exorcisms. I simply let in the fresh air, knowing that the fresh air will restore the drooping sufferers, because such is the order of Nature. I have learned, O Thaumaturgus! that your Unseen Agencies, mighty as you deem them, are not free, but are fatally subject to inexorable law; they cannot act capriciously, they must act inexorably. If, therefore, I can detect these laws—if I can ascertain what is the inevitable order of succession—it will be quite needless to trouble myself about your Unseen Agencies. You promise by your art to give me power over these Agencies; by which I shall be able to bend Nature to my purpose, to harness her to my triumphant chariot. But if I can once discover the inexorable laws, I can do what you only delusively pretend. With each discovery of the actual order of Nature, it has been found that man's power *over* Nature has become greater. He cannot alter that order, but he can adapt himself to it. He cannot change the Unchangeable, but he can predict the Inexorable. And Science thus fulfils the pretensions of Magic; it is Magic grown modest.

In proportion as regularity in the succession of phenomena became ascertained, the domain of superstition and magic became restricted. When it was seen that the seed sprouted and the rain fell in spite of all incantations, and that the direction of the wind was a surer indication than the medicine-man's formula, credulity sought refuge in phenomena less understood. Long after the course of Nature was felt to be beyond the influence of magicians, there was profound belief in their influence over life and death. The phenomena of Disease seemed wholly capricious. An invisible enemy seemed to have struck down the young and healthy warrior; an enraged deity seemed to be destroying tribes. When the epidemic breaks out in the Grecian camp, Homer attributes it solely to the rage of Apollo, whose priest has been offended. Down from Olympus the farther comes, “like night,” sits apart from the camp, and for nine days keeps pouring in his dreadful arrows. The soldiers are struck by this invisible, but too fatal, enemy. The only rescue is by appeasing Apollo's wrath. Even in our own day, men who would smile at this childish fable, found no difficulty in attributing the Irish famine to a cause no less childish: they averred it was a punishment for the “Maynooth grant.” In both cases the cause or order of Nature was unsuspected; and ignorant imagination was free to invent the explanation which best pleased it.

The early priests were necessarily magicians. All early religions had a strong bias towards sorcery; because their priests, believing that all the forces of Nature were good and evil demons, necessarily arrogate to themselves a power over these demons, either by propitiation or intimidation. These men never attempted to make mankind better, nor to make them wiser; their object was rather to inspire terror, and to propagate the superstitions of which they themselves were dupes. Some secrets they learned, especially the effects of certain herbs in stimulating and stupefying the nervous system; so as to produce visions and hallucinations. They learned, also, how the imagination may be impressed by ceremonies, darkness, lugubrious music, and perfumes; so that the semi-delirious devotee saw whatever he was told to see.

Hecate, for example, was the personification of the mysterious rays which the moon projects into the darkness of night, and only appeared when the moon veiled her disc. To Hecate were attributed the spectres and phantoms of darkness, and all over Greece the rites were celebrated by many practices common to sorcery. Thus everything was brought together to appal the imagination, deceive the senses, and foster sombre conceptions: exorcisms and weird formulas, disgusting philtres, hell-broth made of loathsome objects, such as Shakespeare describes in Macbeth:

Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the cauldron boil and bake:  
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting;  
 Lizard's leg, and owllet's wing;  
 Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;  
 Witches' mummy; maw, and gulf,  
 Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark.

And to these he adds, with his terrible energy of expression,

Liver of blaspheming Jew;  
 Finger of birth-strangled babe,  
 Ditch-delivered by a drab.

The mind of a cultivated man in these days, unable to conceive any *direct relation* between the liver of a blaspheming Jew, and control of the course of Nature, finds it difficult to believe that minds as powerful as his own, under less favourable influences, could seriously credit such incantations. Yet the history of mankind shows that no amount of failure, no argument, no ridicule, no priestly warning and exhortation, could detach men from the practices of sorcery. The temptation to penetrate the secrets of Nature was too strong. Nothing could overcome this temptation while the belief in witchcraft lasted. Nothing could destroy the belief, but the slowly growing conviction that the succession of phenomena was not capricious but inexorable—every single event being rigorously determined by its antecedent, and not to be altered; so long as the antecedent remained the same.

No one believes in Astrology now; because the order of celestial phenomena has been ascertained with remarkable precision. Yet how natural was the belief in starry influences! In the serenity of Asiatic skies, the majestic aspects of the stars would naturally attract incessant notice. It is a tendency, observable in children and savages, to suppose that whatever interests them must also be interested in them. If we look up at the stars, do they not look down upon us? If we follow their course with interest, will they not likewise with interest follow ours? Hence the belief in astral influences. The child upon whose cradle Mars has smiled will be credited with a martial career; the child born under Venus will be under her protection. These are the spontaneous beliefs. Before they can be discredited men must, by a long process, have learned to check this tendency to suppose a direct relation between events which are simply *coincident*, and must have learned that the course of the stars and the course of human conduct are in *no* direct relation to each other. But this is a slow process; and until Science has been thus far established, Astrology, and all other superstitions, are unassailable.

M. Maury, in a recent treatise on Magic and Astrology—which, being at once light and learned, agreeable to read and reliable when read, may safely be commended to the curious—proves that no amount of religious reprobation has been able to uproot the belief in, or check the practices of sorcery.

The early Israelites, in common with all primitive peoples, had their magic, consulted sorcerers, explained dreams, and believed in talismans. In vain Moses proscribed these superstitions. On their return from captivity they

brought with them a number of Babylonian sorceries, together with the belief in angels and demons. By a natural process they came to regard certain formulas written on parchment, and containing the names of celestial spirits, as veritable talismans. Like the Egyptians, they believed that if they summoned demons by their names, these demons were thereby compelled to appear, or to obey orders.

Respecting the gods of other nations, the Jews held two different opinions. One opinion was that these gods were vain idols; the other, that they were agents of Satan; and this was the opinion which finally prevailed. Beelzebub, for example, was originally the god of the Philistines; Astaroth was the lunar goddess of the Phoenicians; Lucifer was a god of the Assyrians; and so on. The early Christians adopted this notion, and attributed all the pagan miracles to agents of Satan. In their view the ancient polytheism was but an extensive demonology. "Idolatry," says Eusebius, one of the great authorities among the Fathers, "is the adoration not of good demons, but of bad and perverse demons." The Church became very liberal in its admittance of demons among the agencies of human affairs. Not only did it attribute bad passions and criminal acts to these demons, but it also chose to detect their agency in every form of error and imposture; by which was meant every form of opinion or pretension inconsistent with the opinions and pretensions of the Church. Once grant the existence of these demons, and it is difficult to assign a limit to their agency. And who *then* questioned their existence? Dwelling in noisome retreats, among the putrid exhalations of rotting graves, they were ready at any moment to issue forth and walk among men, to tempt the saints and delude the sinners. Not only did they tempt men, they sometimes managed to get "possession" of them, entering their bodies, and making them mad. Nay, they entered into houses and pieces of furniture. Exorcisms consequently formed a large proportion of the priestly duties. So late as Pope Sixtus V., the Egyptian obelisk, which was brought to Rome, and now adorns the Piazza del Popolo, was publicly exorcised before it was permitted to stand in a Christian city. There were many formulas of exorcism, but the sign of the cross was naturally considered the most efficacious, and was generally used in addition to all others. Holy water, also, had great virtues. "This continual intervention of exorcism," remarks M. Maury, "is attested by the great number of conjurations adopted in the liturgy. It was an incessant litany of anathemas against Satan. He was described as a perfidious intriguer, a thief, a serpent; a wild beast, a dragon of hell, a Belial, &c.; and in order not to be forced to repeat always this long list of insults, they were engraved on amulets, which hence acquired the virtue of driving Satan away." What wonderful ideas of causation are implied in the conception! Epidemics, meteors, and prodigies of all kinds were attributed to demons. Plagues,

tempests, and hailstorms, by one party believed to be visitations of divine wrath, were by another and larger party believed to be the work of malignant demons; and this opinion was held even by so subtle and remarkable a thinker as Thomas Aquinas. It is to this belief, M. Maury says, that is due the practice of ringing the church bells during violent storms—that being the readiest mode of exorcising the demons. Formerly the storm was exorcised by the presentation of the cross, and by sprinkling holy water. As the worst storm comes to an end at last, the exorcism was certain to be successful.

Curious it is to notice what multitudes of Pagan superstitions passed into the ordinary beliefs of the Christians. The neophytes were unable to disengage their minds from all the associations of childhood, from all the prejudices in which they had been reared. Among these were the belief in, and use of, amulets and enchantments. Even Saint Augustin believed that demons were to be influenced by certain signs, certain stones, certain charms and ceremonies; and if Saint Augustin could believe this, we may imagine that less vigorous intellects would be still more credulous. There was universal belief in the evocation of departed spirits, upon evidence as cogent as modern Rapping Mediums consider sufficient in 1861, and with considerably more excuse. In the ninth century we find the Bishop of Aosta excommunicating serpents, moles, mice, rats, and other beasts, because into these bestial forms the agents of Satan delighted to hide themselves—somewhat stupidly, it would seem, seeing how little fascination these beasts, generally, have for mankind;—but the demons were never held to be very wise. Saint Bernard, from the same cause, excommunicated flies, and all the flies in the district shrivelled up at once. In the year 1200, Saint Walther, of Scotland, proclaimed that the devil assumed the forms of a pig, a bull, a black dog, a wolf, and a rat. The black dog and black cat were generally believed to have some secret understanding with the devil; and if owned by a wise man or a blear-eyed old woman, the evidence was sufficient.

There is abundant evidence to prove that the spirit of Polytheism and its sorceries survived long after the official Polytheism was extinct. Its temples were in ruins, or were converted into churches; its idols were broken, or were rebaptised as saints and angels. Many a temple of Diana or of Venus is now crowded by worshippers of the Madonna, in very much the same spirit, and with not a little of the old forms. The traveller in Italy is constantly being surprised by some living tradition of Polytheism thinly veiled. In every Neapolitan hut may be seen the ancient Lares; only they assume the form of the Virgin, before whose image a lamp is kept for ever burning. Such images are transmitted from generation to generation. They are implored on every occasion, more even than the Saviour. When the superstitious Neapolitan meditates a crime, he covers these images with a veil, to hide the crime from them.

Sometimes the change from Pagan to Christian has been very slight indeed, as in the case of Aidoneus of Epirus, who has been altered into Saint Donatus, and Dea Pelina, who has become Saint Pelino, and Felicitas Publica, who has become Santa Felicità. In festivals meant to please the populace, we expect to find the old traditions of worship, and to find the old divinities under the masks of saints. The festivals of Ceres and Vesta, for example, have been slightly changed in the Neapolitan festival of the Madonna. Murray describes it thus: "Their persons are covered with every variety of ornament; the heads of both men and women are crowned with wreaths of flowers and fruits; in their hands they carry garlands and poles, like thyrsi, surmounted with branches of fruit or flowers. On their return homewards, their vehicles are decorated with branches of trees, intermixed with pictures of the Madonna purchased at her shrine, and their horses are gay with ribbons of all hues, and frequently with a plume of snowy feathers on their heads. The whole scene as fully realises the idea of a Bacchanalian procession as if we could now see one emerging from the gates of old Pompeii."

M. Maury notices that the processions and prayers of priests and augurs for the plantations, vines, and public health, have all been consecrated anew. The sign of the cross, the use of holy water, and the Agnus Dei, have replaced the old exorcisms, charms, and talismans. The Hebrew names of God, or the names of the angels, and of Abraham or Solomon, took the place of the names of Pagan deities. If oracles disappeared, the tombs of martyrs and confessors were not silent, and were interrogated with the same credulity as had formerly been shown to the oracles. In vain the Church forbade sorcery and witchcraft; it encouraged many kindred superstitions, and did not destroy the source of all superstition. Paternosters were murmured over wounds, in the perfect belief that paternosters were curative, and that wounds did not follow any strictly inexorable course. The relics of saints were (and still are) devoutly believed to have a wonder-working power—the same power as was formerly attributed to charms and talismans. The evil spirits who caused the drought, the sickness, or the wrecks, would shrink away in terror at the sight of the relics. And when the Church encouraged such beliefs as this, how could it expect to warn men from believing in chaplets which had the power of arresting bleeding, or in any other superstitions?

Some of the details collected by M. Maury are curious. Thus he notices that to this day the practice of placing a fee for Charon (passage money across the Styx) is not quite unknown. In some districts the money is placed in the mouth of the corpse. By the inhabitants of the Jura it is placed under the head of the corpse, attached to a little wooden cross. In the Morvan it is placed in the hands of the defunct. The statue of Cybele used annually to be plunged into the sacred bath; she is still publicly dipped, only Cybele has become a saint. In Perpignan

they solemnly dip the relics of Saint Gulderic in the waters of the Têt, confident by this ceremony that they shall secure rain. Rain falls, sure enough; and if it sometimes falls too scantily, or too tardily, this is only attributed to meteoric influences by infidels and materialists.

Many are the traces of the past which scholars find in the present. The Lupercalian festivals have become our Lenten carnival—rather a dreary festival, it must be owned! The January offerings have become our New Year's gifts—pleasant enough, when they do not assume the shape of dreadfully good “gift-books.” The salutation of “God bless you,” when you sneeze, is thoroughly classical. No doubt the ingenious device of securing “luck” to a newly-married couple, by throwing an old shoe after the departing post-chaise, is equally ancient, and impresses the philosophic mind with a lively sense of how men imagine the course of Nature to be determined. The evil eye is not only very ancient, but seems to be universal. The ancients believed that when any one's ears tingled it was because somebody was talking of him; they believed, also, that it was unlucky to spill the salt.

We have already said that the Church, although appropriating many of the rites and ceremonies of Polytheism, energetically repudiated many others; but in vain. The demons which could not be invoked at the altar, were invoked in secret. Magic was called upon to perform what religion refused. The Church fulminated, and assured men that they perilled their souls by commerce with demons; but it did not discredit the agency of the demons, and its menaces were futile. In vain also was the secular arm employed against those whom the fear of hell could not restrain: the superstition was ineradicable, irresistible. Curiosity, the desire of vengeance, the passion for some secret means of superiority—these motives were stronger than fear, and these motives could only cease to impel men when men ceased to believe in supernatural agency. But against this belief the Church raised no voice. The wisest of men devoutly accepted it. Gregory the Third, in his edict against the use of Magic, especially addresses himself to the clergy as well as to the laity; but his edict is against the *use* of Magic, not against the *belief* in Magic.

Magic, no less than Science, rests on the *explanation* of phenomena. The only difference is that Magic seeks its explanation in some analogy drawn from human nature, and Science seeks its explanation in some analogy drawn from other phenomena. No preliminary knowledge is required for the former; man instinctively dramatises the events, and interprets them by such motives as sway his own conduct. For the latter explanation it is necessary that a vast amount of knowledge shall have been accumulated; man must know a great deal about many phenomena before he can detect their laws. Let us see this illustrated in the views held about Dreams.

In Egypt, Assyria, Judea, and Greece, there was a regular class of dream-interpreters, men

who undertook to *explain* what was prefigured by dreams. No one doubted that the phenomena were supernatural. Dreams *came* to a man; they were not suspected to be the action of his brain. We see this belief naïvely exhibited in Homer, who makes Jupiter summon a dream (*oneiros*) to his presence as he would summon any other personage. He bids the dream descend to the camp of Agamemnon, and appear before that King of Men, to whom he must deliver a most delusive message. The dream departs, and repeats the very words of Jove. Nor is this conception wonderful. If you consider dreams, you will notice as one peculiarity that in them the mind is, as it were, separated into two distinct entities which hold converse with each other. We are often astonished at the statements and repartees of our double; we are puzzled by his questions; we are angered or flattered by his remarks—and yet these have been our own creation. It is natural to suppose that we have actually been visited during sleep by one of the spirit world; and until the science of psychology had learned to interpret the phenomena of dreams by the phenomena of waking thought, especially of reverie, this supernatural explanation would prevail.

The same may be said of insanity. It was necessarily regarded as supernatural, until science had shown it to be a disease of the nervous system. The dreadful aspect, the incoherent language and conduct of madmen, seemed only referable to an evil demon having got “possession” of the man; and this belief was of course strengthened by the general tendency of madmen to attribute their actions to some one urging or forcing them. They fancied themselves pursued by fiends, whom they saw in the lurid light of their own distempered imaginations. But before science could have ascertained even the simplest laws of insanity, what an immense accumulation of knowledge on particular points was necessary! Instead of believing that a madman is “possessed,” we say he is “diseased;” instead of a demon within him to be exorcised, we say there is a functional disturbance in his nervous system which must be reduced to healthy activity once more. We know as certainly that a disease of this nervous system will produce the phenomena of insanity, as that an inflammation of the mucous membrane will produce a catarrh, or that disease of the lungs will produce consumption. But what vast labours of many generations before it could have been ascertained that the nervous system was specially engaged in all mental phenomena, and that insanity was a disease of this system! It was so much readier an explanation to suppose that a demon had entered the unhappy victim; and this once suggested, it became a question how best to get rid of the demon. Incantation was an easy resort. Among the means of purification many nations seem to have fancied that “fumigation” must hold a high rank, demons decidedly objecting to stinks. To this day the Samoyedes and Ostiaks burn a bit of reindeer-skin under the nose of the maniac.

The patient falls into a sort of stupefaction from which he often revives considerably calmed, the action of a narcotic on his nervous system being mistaken for an action of stinks on the olfactories of the demon. The old superstition of hanging odoriferous plants over the door of the house of one "possessed" points to the same belief that odours drive away demons.

In this rapid survey of a wide subject we hope the reader has been able to see that magic, which was the Science of the ancients—and the only science they could have for a long while—is willful Nescience in moderns who have ample means at hand for ascertaining the fundamental fact that the *order* of Nature is not capricious but constant, and is not to be altered by incantations, even by those powerful incantations which take place in the "most respectable drawing-rooms" somewhat darkened. The ancient thaumaturge was to a great extent his own dupe; if he did practise certain tricks, he had profound belief that there was an art to which he pretended. But the modern thaumaturge is generally an impostor; and those who believe in him, and his miracles, ought to be consistent, and believe in all the grossest superstitions of the early ages. For if the order of Nature is *not* constant, as we suppose, there is no assignable limit to the power of Magic.

#### THE KING OF YVETOT.

BÉRANGER has immortalised the King of Yvetot in one of his best songs. He describes him as a king little known in history, who, late to rise and early to bed, slept very well without any glory, and crowned by Jeanneton with a nightcap, was a good little king. The poet says he made four repasts a day in his thatched palace, travelled through his kingdom on an ass, and, fearing no harm, had a dog for his only guard, and was a good little king. Never trying to enlarge his kingdom, he proved a pleasant neighbour, and making pleasure his code, was a model potentate; and it was only when he died and was buried that the people wept, saying he was a good little king. Béranger adds that the portrait of this good and worthy prince is still preserved as the signboard of a famous inn in his province, where very often the people exclaim while drinking before it:

Oh! oh! oh! ah! ah! ah! ah!

Quel bon petit roi c'était là!

La, la!

We learn from Béranger's Memoirs, that he sang his little king, as Chamisso wrote his Peter Schlemihl, or Shadowless Man, as a satire upon the vast and unsolid ambition of the First Bonaparte, who was then (1813) seen tottering towards his fall, after his disastrous Russian campaign.

Yvetot is a little French village containing about a thousand inhabitants, situated on the railway between Paris and Havre. The name Yvetot is composed of two words: "Yve," or "Yvo" (probably the same as Ives), a common German name, and "tot," the Celtic word for a

house or dwelling-place. Gaguin, a French historian of the sixteenth century, says the origin of the kingdom of Yvetot was contemporaneous with that of the French monarchy; that is to say, it was founded in the reign of the Merovingian king, Clotaire the First. The following is the story told by Gaguin:

A certain lord of Yvetot, named Gaulthier, having incurred the wrath of King Clotaire, "went to foreign parts, where he made war against the enemies of the faith." After ten years of voluntary exile, believing the king's wrath to be somewhat appeased, and having obtained a letter from the Pope recommending him to mercy, Gaulthier ventured back to France. Arriving at Soissons on a Good Friday, and hearing that the king was at church, he hastened there, and, throwing himself at his feet, implored his pardon. "But Clotaire, being a savage prince, drawing his sword, ran it through his body." On hearing of this murder, perpetrated in a church on such a day, the Pope threatened the murderer with his spiritual thunders if he did not immediately make some atonement for his crime. The terrified Clotaire, therefore, consented to erect the manor of Yvetot into a kingdom for the benefit of the heirs of his victim. Gaguin adds, that "he finds from an exact and indubitable authority that this extraordinary event took place in the year of grace 536."

Great doubts, however, have been cast upon the "indubitable authority" of Robert Gaguin, by reason that no mention of the king or kingdom of Yvetot is to be found in the annals of France prior to 1392, although there are allusions to the fief of Yvetot as far back as the eleventh century. Among the Norman lords who fought at the battle of Hastings under William the Conqueror, the name of the Sire Jean d'Yvetot occurs, and about a century later, Gaulthier d'Yvetot accompanied his suzerain, Henry the Second, to the Crusades. During the reign of Philippe-Auguste, in 1204, after the reunion of Normandy to France, the name of Robert d'Yvetot figures among the Norman lords possessing noble and military fiefs, and who are requested to furnish "the third part of a man-at-arms" (Robertus de Yvetot tertiam partem militis): meaning, thereby, that he has to pay one-third of the expense of his own equipment.

The first king of Yvetot recognised by the authorities of Normandy was Jean the Fourth, who reigned towards the end of the fourteenth century. He received letters patent from Charles the Sixth and Louis the Eleventh of France, forbidding any of their subjects from meddling with him, and acknowledging his rights and privileges. Nevertheless, when on one occasion Louis the Eleventh (who never allowed himself to be called a king) happened to be at Yvetot, he somewhat alarmed Jean the Fourth by turning towards his attendants and saying, "Gentlemen, there are no longer any kings in France." However, after a good deal of teasing, Jean the Fourth was permitted to reign and die, king of Yvetot.

The kings of Yvetot possessed all the pre-

rogatives of sovereignty. They had a court of justice of the highest jurisdiction, which issued its decisions without appeal; in case of minority they could not be enrolled in the noble guard of the King of France; they were not required to serve in the army, nor to pay fealty and homage, nor any tax whatsoever; and, in a word, they had no hierarchical superior.

A medal, still preserved from the old charter-house of Yvetot, represents Martin the First, son of Jean the Fourth, sitting upon his throne—a sort of four-legged stool—with a plain gold crown upon his head, and dressed in a coat of mail fastened tight round the waist. He has long hair, like all the Merovingian kings, and is represented affectionately embracing one of his subjects named Bobé. Martin the First put into circulation as money, notched bits of leather, with the mark of a nail-head in the middle. But as the circulation of this sort of coin was restricted to his own state, when the king fell into difficulties, he was compelled to sell his kingdom to Pierre de Vilaines, the chamberlain of the King of France.

Pierre Vilaines styled himself Pierre the First, and had reigned but a few months over his tiny kingdom when he was killed at the battle of Azincourt. His son, who succeeded him as Pierre the Second, died in the year 1418, after seeing his capital burnt down during the occupation of France by the English; and it was not until after the invaders had been driven out of the country that the kingdom of Yvetot was re-established in "all its privileges," and Guillaume Chenu ascended the four-legged stool under the title of Guillaume the First. But he was not permitted to enjoy it unmolested. The law officers of France were jealous of the little court of Yvetot, which, pronouncing and executing its own sentences, would acknowledge no higher power than its own. Yet the King of France, after much litigation, by letters patent dated 1461 confirmed the independence of Yvetot.

The great event of the reign of Guillaume the First, was the sinking of a well in the court-yard of his château, for the benefit of those of his subjects who could not obtain drinking water. This well still exists; and the king commemorated his achievement by a medal with a representation of a well, a crank, a bucket, and a rope.

Guillaume was succeeded by his son Jacques, who had two sons and one daughter. The youngest son lost his rank by marrying a daughter of a simple burgess of Rouen, while the princess royal of Yvetot married a courtier named Jean Baucher, who, on the death of Jacques the First, took possession of the four-legged stool, to the exclusion of the eldest son of the late king. His wife, however, happening to die soon afterwards, Jean Baucher saw in the occurrence the hand of God, and in a fit of remorse restored the crown to its rightful heir, Pierre the First, familiarly nicknamed by his subjects Pierrot, or clown.

Martin Dubellay, an ambassador of Francis the First, and governor of Normandy, having married Isabeau, the granddaughter of Pierrot,

became king of Yvetot, because in France the sceptre cannot become a distaff.

During the reign of Henry the Second of France the Norman parliament succeeded in wresting from the court of Yvetot the power of pronouncing decrees without appeal, and from this time the kingdom sank into the condition of a fief. Nevertheless, when the successor of Martin the Second appeared at the coronation of Marie de Médicis, the king, Henry the Fourth, perceiving that no seat had been reserved for him, showed him to one himself, saying, "I will have a seat of honour given to my little king of Yvetot, in accordance with his station and his rank."

The kingdom of Yvetot, in fact, no longer existed after the Norman parliament had obtained the right of control over its high court of law; and from that time the lords of Yvetot, ceasing to call themselves kings, took the title of princes. The last prince of Yvetot, born in 1753, passed his life in travelling, writing books of no permanent value, and corresponding with Voltaire, and other eminent men of his time. He endowed his kingdom with a market and a church, and the inscriptions to the honour of "Camillus the Third" are still to be seen upon their façades. When this literary king died, in 1789, the dynasty and kingdom of Yvetot perished.

So, this is all that is known of BÉRANGER'S delightful little king, who slept very well without any glory, was crowned with a nightcap, had a dog for his guard, and was a good little king. Heaven send all the world as good kings!

#### A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE.

##### CHAPTER XLVII.

THOUGH I was a few minutes late for dinner, Miss Herbert did not chide me for delay. She was charming in her reception of me; nor was the fascination diminished to me by feeling with what generous warmth she had defended and upheld me.

There is a marvellous charm in the being defended by one you love, and of whose kind feelings towards you, you had never dared to assure yourself till the very moment that confirmed it. I don't know if I ever felt in such spirits in my life. Not that I was gay or light-hearted so much as happy—happy in the sense of a self-esteem I had not known till then. And what a spirit of cordial familiarity was there now between us! She spoke to me of her daily life, its habits and even of its trials; not complainingly nor fretfully, far from it, but in a way to imply that these were the burdens meted out to all, and that none should arrogantly imagine he was to escape the lot of his fellows. And then we talked of the Croftons, of whom she was curious to hear details—their ages, appearance, manner, and so on—lastly, how I came to know them, and thus imperceptibly led me to tell of myself and of my story. I am sure that we each of us had enough of care upon our hearts, and yet none would have ever guessed it to have seen how joyously and merrily we

laughed over some of the incidents of my chequered career. She bantered me, too, on the feeble and wayward impulses by which I had suffered myself to be moved, and gravely asked me, had I accomplished any single one of all objects I had set before my mind in starting?

Far more earnestly, however, did we discuss the future. She heard with joy that I had already secured a passage for Constantinople, and declared that she could not dismiss from her mind the impression that I was destined to aid their return to happiness and prosperity. I liked the notion, too, of there being a fate in our first meeting; a fate in that acquaintance-ship with the Croftons, which gave the occasion to seek her out again; and last of all, if it might be so, a fate in the influence I was to exercise over their fortunes. I was so absorbed in these pleasant themes, that I, with as little of the lion in my heart as any man breathing, never once thought of the quarrel and its impending consequences. How my heart beat as her soft breath fanned me while she spoke! As she was telling when and from whence I was to write to her, the servant came to say that a gentleman outside begged to see Mr. Potts. I hurried to the hall.

"Not come to disturb you, Potts," said the skipper, in a brisk tone; "only thought it best to make your mind easy. It's all right."

"A thousand thanks, captain," said I, warmly. "I knew when the negotiation was in your hands, it would be so."

"Yes; his friend, a Major Colesby, boggled a bit at first. Couldn't see the thing in the light I put it. Asked very often 'who were you?' asked, too, 'who I was?' Good that! it made me laugh. Rather late in the day, I take it, to ask who Bob Rogers is! But in the end, as I said, it all comes right, quite right."

"And his apology was full, ample, and explicit? Was it in writing, Rogers? I'd like it in writing."

"Like what in writing?"

"His apology, or explanation, or whatever you like to call it."

"Who ever spoke of such a thing? Who so much as dreamed of it? Haven't I told you the affair is all right? and what does all right mean, eh?—what does it mean?"

"I know what it ought to mean," said I, angrily.

"So do I, and so do most men in this island, sir. It means twelve paces under the Battery wall, fire together, and as many shots as the aggrieved asks for. That's all right, isn't it?"

"In one sense it is so," said I, with a mock composure.

"Well, that's the only sense I ever meant to consider it by. Go back now to your tea, or your sugar-and-water, or whatever it is, and when you come home to-night, step into my room, and we'll have a cozy chat and a cigar. There's one or two trifling things that I don't understand in this affair, and I put my own explanation on them, and maybe it ain't the right one. Not that it signifies now, you perceive, be-

cause you are here to the fore, and can set them right. But as by this time to-morrow you might be where—I won't mention—we may as well put them straight this evening."

"I'll beat you up, depend upon it," said I, affecting a slap-dash style. "I can't tell you how glad I am to have fallen into your hands, Rogers. You suit me exactly."

"Well, it's more than I expected when I saw you first, and I kept saying to myself, 'Whatever could have persuaded Joe to send me a creature like that?' To tell you the truth, I thought you were in the cheap funeral line."

"Droll dog!" said I, while my fingers were writhing and twisting with passion.

"Not that it's fair to take a fellow by his looks. I'm aware of that, Potts. But go back to the parlour—that's the second time the maid has come out to see what keeps you. Go back, and enjoy yourself; maybe you won't have so pleasant an opportunity soon again."

This was the parting speech of the wretch as he buttoned the collar of his coat, and with a short nod bade me good-by, and left me.

"Why did you not ask your friend to take a cup of tea with us?" said Kate, as I re-entered the drawing-room.

"Oh! it was the skipper, a rough sort of creature, not exactly made for drawing-room life; besides, he only came to ask me a question."

"I hope it was not a very unpleasant one, for you look pale and anxious."

"Nothing of the kind—a mere formal matter about my baggage."

It was no use; from that moment, I was the most miserable of mankind. What availed it to speculate any longer on the future? How could I interest myself in what years might bring forth? Hours, and a very few of them, were all that were left to me. Poor girl! how tenderly she tried to divert my sorrow; she, most probably, ascribed it to the prospect of our speedy separation; and with delicacy and tact, she tried to trace out some faint outlines of what painters call "extreme distance"—a sort of future, where all the skies would be rose-coloured and all the mountains blue. I am sure, if a choice had been given me at that instant, I would rather have been a courageous man than the greatest genius in the universe. I knew better what was before me. At last it came to ten o'clock, and I arose to say good-by. I found it very hard not to fall upon her neck, and say, "Don't be angry with poor Potts; this is his last as it is his first embrace."

"Wear that ring for me and for my sake," said she, giving me one from her finger; "don't refuse me—it has no value save what you may attach to it from having been mine."

"Oh dear! what a gulp it cost me not to say, "I'll never take it off while I live," and then add, "which will be about eight hours and a half more."

When I got into the open air, I ran as if a pack of wolves were in pursuit of me. I cannot

say why; but the rapid motion served to warm my blood, so that when I reached the hotel, I felt more assured and more resolute.

Rogers was asleep, and so soundly that I had to pull the pillow from beneath his head before I could awaken him; and when I had accomplished the feat, either the remote effect of his last brandy-and-water, or his drowsiness, had so obscured his faculties that all he could murmur out was, "Hit him where he can't be spliced—hit him where they can't splice him!" I tried for a long time to recall him to sense and intelligence, but I got nothing from him save the one inestimable precept; and so I went to my room, and throwing myself on my bed in my cloak, prepared for a night of gloomy retrospect and gloomier anticipation; but, odd enough, I was asleep the moment I lay down.

"Get up, old fellow," cried Rogers, shaking me violently, just as the dawn was breaking; "we're lucky if we can get aboard before they catch us."

"What do you mean?" said I. "What's happened?"

"The governor has got wind of our shindy, and put all the red-coats in arrest, and ordered the police to nab us too."

"Bless him! bless him!" muttered I.

"Ay, so say I. He be blessed!" cried he, catching up my words; "but let us make off through the garden; my gig is down in the offing, and they'll pull in when they hear my whistle. Ain't it provoking—ain't it enough to make a man swear?"

"I have no words for what I feel, Rogers," said I, bustling about to collect my stray articles through the room. "If I ever chance upon that governor—he has only five years of it—I believe—"

"Come along! I see the boat coming round the point yonder." And with this we slipped noiselessly down the stairs, down the street, and gained the jetty.

"Steam up?" asked the skipper, as he jumped into the gig.

"Ay, ay, sir; and we're short on the anchor, too."

In less than half an hour we were under weigh, and I don't think I ever admired a land prospect receding from view with more intense delight than I did that, my last glimpse of Malta.

#### CHAPTER XLVIII.

OUR voyage had nothing remarkable to record: we reached Constantinople in due course, and during the few days the Cyclops remained I had abundant time to discover that there was no trace of any one resembling him I sought for. By the advice of Rogers, I accompanied him to Odessa. There, too, I was not more fortunate; and though I instituted the most persevering inquiries, all I could learn was that some Americans were employed by the Russian Government in raising the frigates sunk at Sebastopol, and that it was not impossible an Englishman, such as I described, might have met an engagement amongst them. At

all events, one of the coasting craft was already at Odessa, and I went on board of her to make my inquiry. I learned from the mate, who was a German, that they had come over on rather a strange errand, which was to convey a corps of circus people to Balaklava. The American contractor at that place being in want of some amusement, had arranged with these people to give some weeks' performances there, but that, from an incident that had just occurred, the project had failed. This was no less than the elopement of the chief dancer, a young girl of great beauty, with a young Prince of Bavaria. It was rumoured that he had married her, but my informant gave little credence to this version, and averred that he believed he had bought, not only herself, but a favourite old Arab horse she rode, for thirty thousand piastres. I asked eagerly where the others of the corps were to be found, and heard they had crossed over to Simoom, all broken up and disjointed, the chief clown having died of grief after the girl's flight.

If I heard this tale rudely narrated, and not always with the sort of comment that went with my sympathies, I sorrowed sincerely over it, for I guessed upon whom these events had fallen, and recognised poor old Vaterchen and the dark-eyed Tintefleck.

"You've fallen into the black melancholies these some days back," said Rogers to me. "Rouse up, and take a cruise with me. I'm going over to Balaklava with these steam-boilers, and then to Sinope, and so back to the Bosphorus. Come aboard to-night, it will do you good."

I took his counsel, and at noon next day we dropped anchor at Balaklava. We had scarcely passed our "health papers," when a boat came out with a message to inquire if we had a doctor on board who could speak English, for the American contractor had fallen from one of the scaffolds that morning, and was lying dreadfully injured up at Sebastopol, but unable to explain himself to the Russian surgeons. I was not without some small skill in medicine; and, besides, out of common humanity, I felt it my duty to set out, and at about sunset I reached Sebastopol.

Being supposed to be a physician of great skill and eminence, I was treated by all the persons about with much deference, and, after very few minutes' delay, introduced into the room where the sick man lay. He had ordered that when an English doctor could be found, they were to leave them perfectly alone together; so that as I entered, the door was closed immediately, and I found myself alone by the bedside of the sufferer. The curtain was closely drawn across the windows, and it was already dusk, so that all I could discover was the figure of a man, who lay breathing very heavily, and with the irregular action that implies great pain.

"Are you English?" said he, in a strong, full voice. "Well, feel that pulse, and tell me if it means sinking—I suspect it does."

I took his hand and laid my finger on the artery. It was beating furiously—far too fast to count, but not weakly nor faintly.

"No," said I; "this is fever, but not debility." "I don't want subtleties," rejoined he, roughly. "I want to know am I dying? Draw the curtain there, open the window full, and have a look at me."

I did as he bade me, and returned to the bedside. It was all I could do not to cry out with astonishment; for, though terribly disfigured by his wounds, his eyes actually covered by the torn seal that hung over them, I saw that it was Harpar lay before me, his large reddish beard now matted and clotted with blood.

"Well, what's the verdict?" cried he, sternly; "don't keep me in suspense."

"I do not perceive any grave symptoms so far—"

"No cant, my good friend, no cant! It's out of place just now. Be honest, and say what is it to be—live or die?"

"So far as I can judge, I say, live."

"Well, then, set about the repairs at once. Ask for what you want—they'll bring it."

Deeming it better not to occasion any shock whatever to a man in his state, I forbore declaring who I was, and set about my office with what skill I could.

With the aid of a Russian surgeon, who spoke German well, I managed to dress the wounds and bandage the fractured arm, during which the patient never spoke once, nor, indeed, seemed to be at all concerned in what was going on.

"You can stay here, I hope," said he to me, when all was finished. "At least, you'll see me through the worst of it. I can afford to pay, and pay well."

"I'll stay," said I, imitating his own laconic way; and no more was said.

Now, though it was not my intention to pass myself off for a physician, or derive any, even the smallest advantage from the assumption of such a character, I saw that, remote as the poor sufferer was from his friends and country, and totally destitute of even companionship, it would have been cruel to desert him until he was sufficiently recovered to be left with servants.

From his calm composure, and the self-control he was able to exercise, I had formed a far too favourable opinion of his case. When I saw him first, the inflammatory symptoms had not yet set in; so that, at my next visit, I found him in a high fever, raving wildly. In his wanderings he imagined himself ever directing some gigantic enterprise, with hundreds of men at his command, whose efforts he was cheering or chiding alternately. The indomitable will of a most resolute nature was displayed in all he said; and though his bodily sufferings must have been intense, he only alluded to them to show how little power they had to arrest his activity. His ever-recurring cry was, "It can be done, men! It can be done! See that we do it!"

I own that, even though stretched there on a sick-bed, and raving madly, this man's unquenchable energy impressed me greatly; and I often fancied to myself what must have been the resources of such a bold spirit in sad contrast to

a nature pliant and yielding like mine. To the violence of the first access, there soon succeeded the far more dangerous state of low fever, through which I never left him. Care and incessant watching could alone save him, and I devoted myself to the last with the resolve to make this effort the first of a new and changed existence.

Day and night in the sick-room, I lost appetite and strength, while an unceasing care preyed upon me and deprived me even of rest. The very vacillations of the sick man's malady had affected my nerves, rendering me over-anxious, so that just as he had passed the great crisis of the malady, I was stricken down with it myself.

My first day of convalescence after seven weeks of fever found me sitting at a little window that looked upon the sea, or rather the harbour of Sebastopol, where two frigates and some smaller vessels were at anchor. A group of lighters and such unpicturesque craft occupied another part of the scene, engaged as it seemed in operations for raising other vessels. It was in gazing for a long while at these, and guessing their occupation, that I learned to trace out the past, and why and how I had come to be sitting there. Every morning the German servant who tended me through my illness, used to bring me the "Herr Baron's" compliments to know how I was, and now he came to say, that as the "Herr Baron" was able to walk so far, he begged that he might be permitted to come and pay me a visit. I was aware of the Russian custom of giving titles to all who served the government in positions of high trust, and was therefore not astonished when the announcement of the Herr Baron was followed by the entrance of Harpar, who, sadly reduced, and leaning on a crutch, made his way slowly to where I sat. I attempted to rise to receive him, but he cried out, half sternly,

"Sit still! we are neither of us in good trim for ceremony."

He motioned to the servants to leave us alone; then, laying his wasted hand in mine, for we were each too weak to grasp the other, he said,

"I know all about it. It was you saved my life, and risked your own to do it."

I muttered out some unmeaning words—I know not well what—about duty and the like.

"I don't care a brass button for the motive. You stood to me like a man." As he said this, he looked hard at me, and shading the light with his hand, peered into my face. "Haven't we met before this? Is not your name Potts?"

"Yes, and you're Harpar."

He reddened, but so slightly, that but for the previous paleness of his sickly cheek it would not have been noticeable.

"I have often thought about you," said he, musingly. "This is not the only service you have done me; the first was at Lindau; mayhap you have forgotten it. You lent me two hundred florins, and, if I'm not much mistaken, when you were far from being rich yourself."

He leaned his head on his hand, and seemed to have fallen into a musing fit.

"And after all," said I, "of the best turn I ever did you, you have never heard in your life, and what is more, might never hear, if not from myself. Do you remember an altercation on the road to Feldkirch, with a man called Riggess?"

"To be sure I do; he smashed the small-bone of this arm for me; but I gave worse than I got. They never could find that bullet I sent into his side, and he died of it at Palermo. But what share in this did you bear?"

"Not the worst nor the best; but I was imprisoned for a twelvemonth in your place."

"Imprisoned for *me*?"

"Yes; they assumed that I was Harpar, and as I took no steps to undeceive them, there I remained till they seemed to have forgotten all about me."

Harpar questioned me closely and keenly as to the reasons that prompted this act of mine—an act all the more remarkable, as, to use his own words, "We were men who had no friendship for each other, actually strangers;" and, added he, significantly, "the sort of fellows who, somehow, do not usually 'hit it off' together. You, a man of leisure, with your own dreamy mode of life; I, a hard worker, who could not enjoy idleness; and in this sense, far more likely to hold each other cheaply than otherwise."

I attempted to account for this piece of devotion as best I might, but not very successfully, since I was only endeavouring to explain what I really did not well understand myself. Nor could a vague desire to do something generous, merely because it *was* generous, satisfy the practical intelligence of him who heard me.

"Well," said he, at last, "all that machinery you have described is so new and strange to me, I can tell nothing as to how it ought to work; but I'm as grateful to you as a man can be for a service which he could not have rendered *himself*, nor has the slightest notion of what could have prompted *you* to do. Now, let me hear by what chance you came here?"

"You must listen to a long story to learn that," said I; and as he declared that he had nothing more pressing to do with his time, I began, almost as I have begun with my reader. On my first mention of Crofton, he asked me to repeat the name; and when I spoke of meeting Miss Herbert at the Milford station, he slightly moved his chair, as if to avoid the strong light from the window; but from that moment till I finished, he never interrupted me by a word, nor interposed a question.

"And it was she gave you that old seal-ring I see on your finger?" said he, at last.

"Yes," said I. "How came you to guess that?"

"Because I gave it to her the day she was sixteen! I am her father."

I drew a long breath, and could only clutch his arm with astonishment, without being able to speak.

"It's all well known in England, now. Every body has been paid in full, my creditors have

met in a body, and signed a request to me to come back and recommence business. They have done more; they have bought up the lease of the Foundry, and sent it out to me. Ay, and old Elkann's mortgage, too, is redeemed, and I don't owe a shilling."

"You must have worked hard to accomplish all this?"

"Pretty hard, no doubt. You remember those little boats with the holes in 'em at Lindau. *They* did the business for me. I was fool enough at that time to imagine that you had got a clue to my discovery, and were after me to pick up all the details. I ought to have known better! It was easy enough to see that *you* could have no head for anything with a 'tough bone' in it! Light, thoughtless creatures of *your* kind are never dangerous anywhere!"

I was not quite sure whether I was expected to return thanks for this speech in my favour, and therefore only made some very unintelligible mutterings.

"There's only one liner now to be raised, and all the guns are already out of her, but I can return to-morrow. I am free; my contract is completed; and the *Ignatief* sloop-of-war is at my orders at Balaclava to convey me to any port I please in Europe."

He said this so boastfully and so vaingloriously, that I really felt Potts in his humility was not the smaller man of the two. Nor, perhaps, was my irritation the less at seeing how little surprise our singular meeting had caused him, and how much he regarded all I had done in his behalf as being ordinary and commonplace services. But, perhaps, the coup de grace of my misery came as he said:

"Though I forwarded that ten-pound note you lent me to Rome, perhaps you'll like to have it now. If you need any more, say so."

My heart was in my mouth, and I felt that I'd have died of starvation rather than accept the humblest benefit at his hands.

"Very well," said he to my refusal; "all the better that you've no need of cash, for, to tell the truth, Potts, you're not much of a doctor, nor are you very remarkable as a man of genius; and it is a kind thing of Providence when such fellows as you are born with even a 'pewter spoon' in their mouths."

I nearly choked, but I said nothing.

"If you'd like me to land you anywhere in the Levant, or down towards the Spanish coast, only tell me."

"No, nothing of the kind. I'm going north; I'm going to Moscow, to Tobolsk: I'm going to Persia and Astracan," said I, in wildest confusion.

"Well, I can give you a capital travelling cloak—it's one of those buntas they make in the Banat, and you'll need it, for they have fearfully severe cold in those countries."

With this, and not waiting my resolute refusal, he rose, hobbled out of the room, and I—ay, there's no concealing it—burst out a crying!

Weak and sick as I was, I procured an

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"araba" that night, and, without one word of adieu, set out for Krim.



It was about two years after this—my father had died in the interval, leaving me a small but sufficient fortune to live on, and I had just arrived in Paris, after a long desultory ramble through the east of Europe—I was standing one morning early in one of the small alleys of the Champs Elysées, watching with half listless curiosity the various grooms as they passed to exercise their horses in the Bois de Boulogne. Group after group passed me of these magnificent animals in which Paris is now more than the rival of London, and at length I was struck by the appearance of a very smartly-dressed groom, who led along beside him a small-sized horse, completely sheeted and shrouded from view. Believing that this must prove some creature of rare beauty, an Arab of purest descent, I followed them as they went, and at last overtook them.

The groom was English, and by my offer of a cigar, somewhat better than the one he was smoking, he was very willing to satisfy my curiosity.

"I suppose he has Arab blood in him," said he, half contemptuously; "but he's forty years old now if he's a day. What they keep him for I don't know, but they make as much work about him as if he was a Christian; and, as for myself, I have nothing else to do than walk him twice a day to his exercise, and take care that his oats are well bruised and mixed with linseed, for he hasn't a tooth left."

"I suppose his master is some very rich man, who can afford himself a caprice like this."

"For the matter of money, he has enough of it. He is the Prince Ernest Maximilian of Würtemberg, and, except the Emperor, has the best stable in all Paris. But I don't think that he cares much for the old horse; it's the *Princess* likes him, and she constantly drives out to the wood here, and when we come to a quiet spot, where there are no strangers, she makes me take off all the body-clothes and the hoods, and she'll get out of the carriage and pat him. And he knows her, that he does! and lifts up that old leg of his when she comes towards him, and tries to whinny, too. But here she comes now, and it won't do if I'm seen talking to you, so just drop behind, sir, and never notice me."

I crossed the road, and had but reached the opposite pathway, when a carriage stopped, and the old horse drew up beside it. After a word or two, the groom took off the hood, and there was Blondel! But my amazement was lost in the greater shock, that the Princess, whose jewelled hand held out the sugar to him, was no other than Catinka!

I cannot say with what motive I was impelled—perhaps the action was too quick for

either—but I drew nigh to the carriage, and raising my hat respectfully, asked if her highness would deign to remember an old acquaintance.

"I am unfortunate enough, sir, not to be able to recall you," said she, in most perfect Parisian French.

"My name you may have forgotten, madame, but scarcely so either our first meeting at Schaffhausen, or our last at Bregenz."

"These are all riddles to me, sir; and I am sure you are too well bred to persist in an error after you have recognised it to be such." With a cold smile and a haughty bow, she motioned the coachman to drive on, and I saw her no more.

Stung to the very quick, but yet not without a misgiving that I might be possibly mistaken, I hurried to the police department, where the list of strangers was preserved. By sending in my card I was admitted to see one of the chiefs of the department, who politely informed me that the princess was totally unknown as to family, and not included in the *Gotha Almanack*.

"May I ask," said he, as I prepared to retire, "if this letter here—it has been with us for more than a year—is for your address? It came with an enclosure covering any possible expense in reaching your address, and has lain here ever since."

"Yes," said I, "my name is Algernon Sydney Potts."

Strange are the changes and vicissitudes of life! Just as I stood there, shocked and overwhelmed with one trait of cold ingratitude, I found a letter from Kate (she who was once Kate Herbert), telling me how they had sent messengers after me through Europe, and begging, if these lines should ever reach me, to come to them in Wales. "My father loves you, my mother longs to know you, and none can be more eager to thank you than your friend Kate Whalley."

I set off for England that night—I left for Wales the next morning—and I have never quitted it since that day.

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